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ADDRESS BY  
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THE MILITARY ASPECTS OF THE COLD WAR

It is a pleasure -- and equally a privilege -- to present some of my views on national strategy in the atmosphere of freedom of thought and expression provided by this Seminar.

May I, at the outset, express the appreciation of the Army, and the Defense Department, to you distinguished Americans who have taken time from your busy schedules to participate in this important work. Your varied and practical experience in many fields contributes immeasurably to the development of the sound ideas and reasoning that are essential to the formulation of any effective strategy.

My subject is "The Military Aspects of the Cold War." Although other speakers have developed the major considerations of a national strategy, touching on aspects of the cold war, my purpose is to relate the application of military power to cold war tactics in somewhat greater detail.

In doing so, I shall give you some of my ideas concerning four major aspects of the subject.

First, the differences between the Communist concept of cold war and that of the Free World nations.

Second, the conditions -- throughout the world -- favorable for cold war tactics.

Third, the influence of military power in the cold war.

And finally, a means for improving our capability to oppose the Communists on the cold war front.

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Although I shall concentrate my remarks primarily on the role of military power in meeting cold war situations, I want to make it clear that this should by no means be construed as a lack of recognition of its inter-relationship with political, economic, and psychological means and their equally important influences.

The roots of the cold war problem are to be found in the economic and social conditions that exist in many areas of the world.

As the President said recently, "The great battleground for the defense and expansion of freedom today is the whole southern half of the globe -- Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East -- the lands of the rising peoples."

Excluding Red China, about 900 million people live in Asia and the Middle East. Another 225 million occupy Africa -- and approximately 190 million live in all of Latin America. This is about 46 per cent of the world population. Experts estimate that this total of 1.3 billion people will more than double in the next 40 years. The vast majority of them live close to, or at the bare subsistence level. Stimulated by their own emerging leadership and influenced by both Free World and Communist ideas, great masses of these people are clamoring for immediate improvement of their lot. They want material things now -- more food, better clothing and shelter -- education and improved medical care. Moreover, they want a voice in determining their lot -- the right to express their views. Their urge for improvement is marked by impatience with slow reforms, by pressures for political change and for dramatic and immediate economic growth.

In order to satisfy these basic wants, economic assistance is required on a long term basis. Provision of such assistance must include a greatly expanded effort on the part of our Allies, and be carefully integrated with political and military actions. Given the time and a secure environment, we can in this manner improve economic conditions measurably in these under-developed areas. But our efforts are often made ineffective or interfered with in some way by factors generated in the cold war.

As a type of conflict, cold war can be defined as the attempt to attain political objectives by the application of all forms of national power -- short of overt conflict. As it applies to the struggle with Communism, it could well be defined as low-intensity conflict between free and open societies

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on the one hand and those that are closed and totalitarian on the other. It is conflict that is complex -- extensive -- subtle and persistent. However, great care is taken to keep the level low enough to avoid provoking the opponent into open military counteraction. Even though the actual conflict is of "low intensity" we must never lose sight of the fact that it is truly a struggle for national survival.

Any consideration of the cold war must take into account the wide and basic difference in concepts between the Communists and ourselves, as they relate to the application of military power for the attainment of national objectives.

Despite all their protestations of a desire for "peaceful coexistence," the Communists consider that a fundamental element of cold war is armed conflict. Khrushchev made this point unmistakably clear in a speech on January 6, 1961, which included these words: "Wars of liberation are not only justifiable but inevitable; . . . the Communists support just wars of this kind wholeheartedly and without reservations."

In fostering and supporting these so-called "just" wars, the Communists take pains to insure that the struggle appears to be a "just" struggle for liberation -- and not primarily a struggle between organized Communism and the Free World. These are three of their typical safeguards.

- First, they keep the level of provocation low and ambiguous. This makes it difficult for the Free World to satisfy its self-imposed requirement for legal and moral justification before resorting to military counteraction.

- Second, they are careful to avoid overt participation by Soviet or Chinese Communist conventional forces. Instead, they rely on cadres of advisors, technicians and indigenous Communist-trained guerrillas.

- Third, although overt engagement with Free World forces is carefully avoided, the Communists maintain a constant threat and capability to engage in conflict of higher intensity. For example, the military strength of the Chinese Communists and the North Vietnamese casts a dark shadow over the so-called war of liberation in Laos -- and Communists, all over the world, have been active in making sure that the shadow is seen by the West.

Turning to the United States view of cold war, we find quite a different concept. We view a cold war situation as essentially a non-military conflict.

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We prefer to think of it as competition. When confronted with an ambiguous military challenge, we search for clear-cut issues, and fruitlessly attempt to define it in terms of open and declared belligerency. Moreover, there are some who believe -- with great sincerity -- that unconventional warfare operations, during so-called peacetime, border on being immoral. They believe that nations holding to true democratic ideals do not stoop to such devices -- even if the enemy does. Perhaps these differences in cold war concepts have significance that none of us fully recognize.

Today there are many situations that lend themselves admirably to the application of Communist cold war tactics. Good examples can be found in every strategic area of the world. In Berlin, we have a situation where a very high order of Western-sponsored economic and social development exists within the shadow of very powerful Soviet and East German military forces. There the tension is heightened by Communist threats to cut off access to the city, or to take it over by military force. Since Allied access rights to Berlin are guaranteed by treaty with the USSR, we have a legal and moral basis for remaining there. While we attempt to preserve these rights in the face of Communist threats, they try to confront us with the apparent alternatives of accepting the risk of general nuclear war -- or acquiescing to Communist take-over. They are fully mindful of the loss of face and stature we would suffer in international circles should we be unwilling to take the steps necessary to prevent a take-over by East German military forces.

In Africa, south of the Sahara, conditions are ideal for Communist exploitation. There we find:

- A military vacuum.
- A very low order of economic and social development.
- Ardent nationalism, and
- Strong anti-colonialism.

This area presents the United States with perhaps its most difficult cold war challenge. The Communists constantly stress our close association with other Western powers -- the old colonial powers from whom the emerging and struggling indigenous leadership wrested their independence. This association causes the emerging states of Africa to view our motives suspiciously as we attempt to counter the effects of Communist political penetration, subversion, and arms assistance.

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In Southeast Asia, political instability, a tendency toward neutralism, and the pressure created by the persistence of Chinese Communist expansion into this rich rice producing area have created conditions that are ripe for cold war tactics. The presence of powerful Communist military forces and the absence of a comparable Free World capability have set the stage for successful Communist penetration, subversion, and guerrilla action operating to undermine and -- as soon as possible -- to take over local governments.

In all of these areas, so susceptible to Communist cold war tactics, military power has a wide range of application. It can be calibrated to a variety of uses that range from those that are essentially peaceful -- and not usually associated with the military -- to those involving overt armed hostilities.

In order to appreciate the potential role that military power can play in the cold war, it would be well to consider the general influence of such power in situations that confront us today.

Laos is an excellent example of the Communist use of force to gain a political objective. Large Communist military forces are immediately available for any task. Designed not only for the preferred low-intensity conflict, but also ready for warfare of greater magnitude, they are ideally adaptable to this situation. This conflict illustrates the three concepts I mentioned earlier. The challenge is skillfully presented -- gradually and ambiguously. Proxy forces are employed. Both sides are aware that the presence of powerful military means in China and Viet Nam gives a decided advantage to the Communists in the event of Free World intervention -- and we are concerned about their evident intent to use them.

On the other hand, consider the example of Cuba -- a troubled area just 80 miles away from the Free World's strongest nation. Here, the proximity of our vast military power -- immediately available for deployment -- did not prevent an active form of Communist penetration. The skillful use of cold war techniques and means -- carefully geared just below the level of unacceptable provocation -- has so far won Cuba for the Communists. Khrushchev threatened the use of Communist bulk military power when he announced that Red artillerymen -- firing rockets from the Soviet Union -- would support Cubans fighting for their liberation. Although this threat lacked credibility, the United States, faced with a low level of military provocation in Cuba, did not choose to threaten, or actually employ its military forces -- although we had the evident ability to do so.

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Military power, if it is to have the desired influence on a cold war situation, must possess four characteristics. First, adequate elements of military power must be reasonably proximate to the cold war scene. Second, these elements must be appropriate for application in the specific situation. Third, there must be in being a full range of capabilities adequate to meet any level of escalation. Finally, the nation controlling these elements must make obvious its will and ability to use them.

A brief evaluation of the military means which the United States possesses today will help determine their cold war utility in terms of these four criteria.

First, there are our nuclear strike forces including manned bombers, ICBM's, POLARIS submarines, and other similar weapons systems. While they are designed primarily to deter or prosecute thermonuclear war, they have an indispensable role in any form of conflict. They represent the ultimate response in the military power game and, as such, have a formidable psychological impact on our Allies and the Communists alike.

These forces, capable of delivering tremendous destructive power over great distances in a very short time, represent a vital part of the array of military power. However, the practical cold war value of these forces is limited in some respects. Their usefulness and credibility for situations short of general war make them more symbolic than utilitarian. They are symbols of advanced technological superiority -- symbols of the ability of a nation to "bat" in the "major leagues" of world power politics. Conversely, they provide a restraint for the great powers to keep the intensity level of conflict as low as possible in order to avoid uncontrolled escalation.

The other major elements of our military power are the land, sea, and air combat units that make up our forward-deployed forces, theater reserves, and strategic reserves. These forces are dual-capable -- that is -- they are designed for both nuclear and non-nuclear combat. They are general purpose forces since they have a vital role in any conflict, including general war. Since they possess a strong conventional capability -- and this capability is being improved in our new divisional organization -- these forces have greater direct cold war utility than the more specialized nuclear strike forces. Nevertheless, even they are designed primarily to meet clearly-defined, unambiguous military threats above cold war levels of intensity.

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As you know, we have these conventional forces deployed in forward areas along the Iron and Bamboo Curtains. Most of these forward deployed forces are relatively fixed by reason of their formal and firm commitment to collective security tasks -- for example, the defense of the NATO area and of Korea. We are able to afford these relatively large, permanent deployments only at the most critical points on the periphery of the Communist empire. Where they are deployed, they serve as visible evidence of U. S. willingness and ability to fight -- at any level of conflict -- to protect our own interests and those of our Allies. It is important to recall that Communism has made no territorial gains in any of the areas where such forces are deployed. Their redeployment to meet military requirements elsewhere would seriously weaken the Free World defense of NATO and Korea.

Theater reserves provide some flexibility and reinforcement to the forces deployed along the Iron and Bamboo Curtains. They include certain elements of the Seventh Army in Europe, the 25th Division in Hawaii, and Army and Marine units on Okinawa, for example. These could be used in adjacent areas where no U. S. forces are now stationed, but there are several limiting factors. These reserves are not adequate to cope with multiple cold war crises, they should remain reasonably available in the event of hostilities in the most critical areas, and some of the distances they would have to be moved are tremendous. For example, reserve elements in Hawaii would have to be lifted roughly 4,000 miles to respond to an emergency in Southeast Asia.

Whenever deployed reserves are inadequate or unavailable, we must depend on our critically-important strategic reserves -- STRAC, Composite Air Strike Forces, and Naval Task Forces. These powerful, combat-ready units are available for deployment to critical cold war areas on extremely short notice. Though a long way from most potential areas of conflict, they exert a considerable psychological impact on our Allies as well as on the Communists, and contribute much to the effectiveness of our diplomatic moves. However, the means required to move them quickly are relatively costly and are not now as adequate as we would like. Here, more and better air and sealift can play an important role in reducing the time and effort now required to deploy these forces. If we do deploy our strategic reserves to critical cold war areas for any extended period, we lose our over-all strategic flexibility, unless we reconstitute these forces promptly from other sources.

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Within our capabilities, the deployment of these U. S. conventional forces is designed to cover the most critical areas. However, they leave great gaps in the sensitive cold war areas of Southern Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.

We try to fill these gaps by building indigenous military strength. Our Military Assistance Advisory Groups and Military Missions are located in more than 40 countries. As you know, these groups are not organized military units. They have a training and advisory mission to assist our friends and Allies to develop and increase their own military capabilities.

These MAAGs and Missions have made significant contributions toward strengthening the capability and will of our Allies to defend themselves. However, because they are too small to do more than the work for which they are designed, the maximum potential of this close association with friendly nations cannot be realized.

Moreover, the military problem confronting the nations located in the cold war battleground is not primarily one of resisting overt external invasion -- it is, rather, one of coping with internal aggression and cold war threats against the stability and security of their governments.

A look at the nations located in Southeast Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East shows that their governments are faced with certain common, essentially military, problems. Some of these are:

- Intelligence and counter-intelligence systems are now either non-existent or personnel assigned to such functions are poorly organized, trained, and equipped. Effective intelligence organizations should be established or greatly strengthened. These are key instruments in the cold war. It is not possible to fight effectively unless one knows his enemy.

- Effective plans and doctrine at the national level in each country for countering insurgency, subversion, and guerrilla activities are lacking. Even though such activities are only a latent threat in some areas, plans must be made early to alert all levels of the country government to the danger, scope, and nature of potential Communist capabilities.

- An apparent apprehension -- in some countries -- seems to be centering on the idea that the United States may not actually honor her collective security commitments in time to prevent a Communist take-over -- a "fait accompli" such as in Laos. We must convince our Allies

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of our determination to stand with them in their hour of peril -- not just sit with them at the cease-fire conference table. We must have the courage and loyalty of the old Sergeant who told his platoon:

"If you want to get along in this platoon, stay out of trouble. But if you guys are trying to do the right thing, and get into trouble, and if I can't get you out of it -- I'll get in with you."

This brief evaluation of our total military power leads one to conclude that while our present forces have marked utility for cold war, they are not completely adaptable to many low-intensity, ambiguous conflict situations.

Having discussed the problems of the cold war and analyzed our present potential for meeting them, let us examine some ways in which we might improve our capability in this field.

The United States recognizes that major social changes will take place in the developing areas of the world, but we must work actively to bring about desirable changes through orderly, evolutionary processes. Communism is working rapidly toward other ends through revolution.

Because the United States works to bring change by evolutionary processes, the apparent results seem more remote than those promised by militant Communism. When the gap is wide between the local people's aspirations and the government's ability to satisfy them, our efforts appear to offer less than the Communists promise but seldom deliver. Although we have tried to overcome this disadvantage by greater economic outlays, other methods are available to us and must be used.

Rapid and direct access to the people and their government is available through the indigenous military forces -- the instrument that supports political stability and power in these underdeveloped areas.

We recognize that control of native military forces is also the goal of Communist action, and if we exploit the advantages of our access to these forces, we will hold the key to an effective frustration of Communist plans for the piecemeal take-over of the threatened countries.

One suggestion, which is offered for your consideration, would involve creating relatively small U. S. military task forces especially organized and trained for prompt introduction into cold war areas. Such task forces can easily be prepared to handle several missions designed to exploit this opportunity and further our national objectives.

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I believe that military units are most appropriate because they have the training, the necessary equipment, and, above all, the self-contained ability to sustain themselves and to function in any environment, however primitive or dangerous. Moreover, in the many areas involved, there is currently an associated military problem of one kind or another.

"Cold war task forces" could be formed and tailored for use in any specified area. They would vary in size depending on the nature and scope of the particular mission. They would contain the types of units appropriate to the problem existing in their area of employment. Included would be service support units, unconventional and special warfare elements, and, combat and combat support units.

In low-intensity cold war situations, a task force composed largely of engineer, medical, signal, supply, transportation, civil affairs, and aviation components could provide a real and immediate capability for accomplishing many, essentially non-military tasks.

Field-type communications between isolated villages and districts in outlying areas can be established. Medical treatment clinics can be opened and operated in remote areas so as to extend simple first aid and field sanitation to countless persons who now have no such service available. Simple water development and land reclamation projects can be started in the hinterlands -- small dams might be built and minor soil erosions checked. Minor roads and trails could be improved and bridges constructed. Simple materiel and equipment could be made available through MAP sources, as well as from growing stocks of obsolete equipment that will be replaced through the Army's modernization program. Civil affairs and intelligence personnel can begin training and operations in their specialized fields.

The jobs can be started by technically competent U. S. military units that are trained to perform just such tasks. Concurrently, these units can organize and train native personnel to assist in the work and eventually to take over and continue the programs working hand in hand with civilian agencies of our government.

Next, there is the higher intensity cold war situation where civic action programs alone cannot operate effectively because a stable internal security environment is lacking. Viet Nam is typical of this sort of situation where direct support to the native military, paramilitary, and police forces is necessary to help them regain and maintain proper internal stability.

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A task force designed for this type of situation would contain capabilities in addition to those I have already mentioned. A Special Forces Group, intelligence and counter-intelligence teams, and psychological warfare units would be added.

The creation of native Special Forces, and assistance to them in conducting offensive operations in denied areas -- as well as against Communist assaults on internal security -- would be done by the Special Forces Group. Such a local capability could provide well-coordinated, hard-hitting, guerrilla and counter-insurgency operations against Communist-supported forces.

In circumstances where the enemy seems to be everywhere, the development of effective intelligence and counter-intelligence measures should be undertaken as a matter of priority.

The psychological warfare unit, with broadcast and leaflet elements, would be employed in connection with the civil action program. Its members would organize, train, equip, and assist local civilian and military agencies to instill in the people the will to preserve and to fight for their freedom.

Finally, there are those areas where overt combat operations may be underway. Currently, Laos is a good example of this type situation.

Where we are faced with these more severe conditions the design of the task force would require greater emphasis on combat units. In addition to the elements useful for civic action and internal security tasks, actual combat units -- infantry and airborne battle groups and artillery battalions -- would be included.

These combat units could engage in a wide variety of tasks in support of the combat operations of the local forces. In certain circumstances they could be used to provide U. S. advisors at field headquarters down to battalion level to assist in the detailed planning and coordination of the combat operations of indigenous forces.

The service elements would now shift the scope of their activities to provide direct advice in the field to their counterpart elements. Moreover, these units could furnish a wide range of direct and effective support of the combat operations by performing supply, communications, transportation, and medical tasks in rear areas.

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Of particular importance would be stepped-up offensive operations in Communist areas, conducted by local Special Forces and actively supported by the U. S. counterparts.

As evidence of our willingness and capability to honor our collective security commitments, these U. S. combat troops would be present in the area as back-up for the indigenous forces and would stand ready to fight side-by-side with them. Their commitment to combat, of course, requires a timely political decision at the highest level. The responsibility of the military professional is to insure constant preparedness to execute such a decision.

The deployment of these task forces, each attuned to the region concerned, could stimulate Allied solidarity and provide an effective means to resist Communist aggression at the low-intensity level.

For example, such task forces deployed in or near threatened areas, would serve three purposes.

First, they would provide a device for getting on the ground in those relatively large regions where no U. S. forces are now immediately available. This would -- in itself -- help to deter Communist infiltration, and generate a more favorable political climate before something happens.

Second, and of equal importance, is the fact that their presence on the "outpost line" would help us prepare ourselves psychologically to take timely action in the event of an emergency -- thereby lessening the tendency to adopt the "wait and see" attitude which only postpones decisive action until conditions get out of hand.

Third, our presence on the ground and the resultant intimate knowledge of the area of operations would greatly facilitate the introduction of larger U. S. and Allied forces if eventually required.

The effectiveness of a program similar to that I have suggested is supported by practical experience. A dramatic example of what has been accomplished by military forces is found in the AFAK program that the United States has been administering in Korea for the past eight years. As many of you know, AFAK is not a word in the Korean language -- although if it is mentioned in even the most remote village there, it is sure to produce a happy smile and warm welcome. AFAK stands for "Armed Forces Assistance

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to Korea, " a program that had its beginning in 1953 when our soldiers voluntarily rolled up their sleeves to help the Korean people pull themselves out of the great devastation of the war.

The humanitarian efforts of these Americans were quickly expanded into a comprehensive program that involved almost every unit of the Armed Forces stationed in Korea. It was soon supported by money made available through Korean Economic Aid Funds provided under the Mutual Security Act. The simple purpose of the program has been achieved -- that is -- to employ the skills and capabilities of military forces in low cost, immediate impact, social and economic development projects.

This is the way the program works. Throughout Korea at the village level, councils are composed of local Korean community leaders and personnel from U. S. military units stationed nearby. Community projects -- such as construction of technical and vocational schools, medical facilities, YMCAs, and the like -- are selected from among those proposed by local civil leaders. Then the civilian-military team goes to work. American military men furnish architectural and construction supervision, loan heavy equipment, and procure material not locally available. The civilian community furnishes the labor, land, and native materials.

When the project is completed the Korean contribution -- expressed in dollar value -- is usually over twice that contributed by the United States. For example, since the program began, the United States has invested about 28 million dollars in terms of surplus material and off-duty soldier time for a return value in completed projects of over 78 million dollars.

Thus far the AFAK program has resulted in the construction of over 1600 schools, 400 civic buildings, 300 public health facilities, 200 churches, 100 separate highway construction and improvement projects, and 70 land reclamation and flood control projects.

Before concluding my remarks, I would like to anticipate the challenge that what I have proposed is strikingly similar to the cold war methods employed by the Communists.

It goes against the grain of human nature to adopt the methods of the enemy, but it would also be the height of folly to ignore the successful pattern that the Communists have established in direct military support to the forces they have pushed into action.

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For example, I refer to the Communist trained and equipped army of North Korea that very nearly swept the boards at the start of the Korean War. The intelligence, counter-intelligence, and guerrilla operations established by the North Koreans prior to the overt invasion were outstandingly successful. Our pre-invasion efforts in South Korea were relatively ineffective.

We know now what the Communists can do. We know what we failed to do, and we know the price paid in human life and suffering.

Therefore, it seems to be simple common sense to examine today, all areas of the world where the cold war conditions that existed in Korea in 1950 are now present. Wherever these conditions are found, our intent to support and -- if necessary -- to reinforce indigenous forces with whatever level of U. S. military effort may be necessary must be made clear and evident to the Communists.

The access to local governments and to their people by U. S. military forces -- as we have demonstrated by our AFAK program in Korea -- is direct, rapid, and inexpensive.

Military power can assist us in seizing the initiative from the Communists. However, and as emphasized earlier, military power must be integrated with political, economic and psychological means to insure its maximum effectiveness.

To be most effective the formulation of our cold war strategy requires thorough coordination at the national level. We must establish specific objectives for each area of the world, and develop a national doctrine and a responsive apparatus -- at all levels -- by which these objectives can be achieved. The capabilities of the Defense and State Departments, CIA, ICA, USIA and other agencies, must be coordinated into effective, combined programs. The current review of the national organization for the planning, direction and conduct of cold war operations, under General Taylor's able direction, appears to be most worthwhile and timely. It may lead to the creation of a national level council which would be charged with these responsibilities.

Gentlemen, in closing, let me leave these four thoughts with you --

First, the United States is engaged in war now. This is not peaceful competition. The ambiguous and devious military challenge that confronts us is especially designed -- and carefully managed -- by the Communists to apply military power below the level of traditional, open war, but it is no less perilous to our national security. This selected form of conflict has maintained the initiative for Communism and has succeeded -- so far -- in eroding Free World strength.

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Second, although the United States is now beginning to recognize this form of Communist aggression, our response, until now, has not been fully effective. To redress the balance, we must act with vigor and purpose now. The Communists are accelerating the pace of the cold war -- time may be running out for us.

Third, we can develop and apply power as subtly and persistently as the Communists. We can do this without automatically causing escalation. Military power -- applied skillfully -- has great potential beyond its evident combat application. The Army is uniquely suited to contribute to this task.

And finally -- the value of historical parallels -- like those of intelligence -- depends entirely upon correct interpretation. An attempt to establish an exact similarity between our position today, and one in the past, can lead up an historical garden path, if we misinterpret either situation.

With full realization of this hazard I recall to your minds the oft repeated cry of the Roman Senator, Cato, "Delenda est Carthago," and ask this question -- Does Khrushchev's "we will bury you" have like meaning for us. My answer would be: "Only if we fail to recognize the sinister nature of the threat or are lacking in our determination to prepare adequately to meet it."

Thank you.

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